

Did the Stroke Affect My Speech?

My speech was affected, but not in any way related to my ability to form my thoughts. Again, the impact was physical in that my tongue and mouth were affected by the same paralysis that affected my left side of my body. The same impaired sensation also caused me to bite my tongue and cheek regularly. Over time and with a lot of practice in front of a mirror, I've learned to compensate and to be constantly aware while chewing, smiling, talking. And oh do I love to talk--to anyone, anytime, anywhere. Just ask my friends.

Understanding Aphasia

Aphasia is difficulty verbalizing what you are thinking; it greatly hampers your ability to communicate. Aphasia is a common affliction of those who suffer a left-side stroke. As my stroke was on the right side, I am not affected by this condition. But I am acutely aware of the frustration it causes those who are: their thoughts, intact and well-formed in the mind, do not translate into the words and utterances that come forth from the mouth. The frustration is shared by the well-intentioned listener, who will try to fill in the gaps, but usually with the wrong word or expression. This causes some aphasia sufferers to avoid any attempt at conversation, which only leads to isolation and loneliness. Please, if you encounter someone with this affliction, be enormously patient and encourage the person to take all the time they need to express themselves.